

Public Assistance News

Historical Repairs Require Unique Perspectives



Ready to roll! To view corbel damages in the 5th Avenue Theater, Project Officer Virginia Hass must first roll under a series of decorative beams

Emergency Management Division Public Assistance staff received a unique perspective on Seattle's 5th Avenue Theatre while monitoring Nisqually Earthquake repairs. Assessment and monitoring activities found them propelling themselves belly down on skateboards over plywood-covered scaffolding to get beyond low hanging architectural ceiling beams, and edging cautiously along catwalks around the domed ceiling with peek-a-boo views of rehearsals on the stage 50 feet below.

The theatre is one of several buildings in downtown Seattle owned by the University of Washington which suffered earthquake damage. The building occupies the entire block and consists of several stores and offices as well as the theatre. It was built in 1926 and is on the National Historic Register. The interior of the theatre was modeled after China's Forbidden City, the Temple of Heavenly Peace, and the Summer Palace. The interior features ornate plasterwork and painting, a replica of the dome in the Imperial Palace of Forbidden City, and ornate chandeliers. Although the Chinese architecture that inspired the theatre was created from wood, the interior of the theatre features plaster formed to resemble wooden structural elements.

The earthquake moved the dome and the ceiling separately, causing over 70 plaster corbel structures, located at the juncture of the two parts, to fracture. Some of the corbel structures, weighing over 40 pounds each, fell onto the seating bellow. Fortunately, the theatre was empty when the earthquake occurred, so there were no injuries. Other damage included cracking and spalling of ornamental and flat plaster and chipping of paint on complex painted scenes.

The engineering firm for the repair project, Skilling, Ward, Magnusson, and Barkshire designed a cabling system to attach the dome to the 7th floor ceiling. This mitigation action will dampen and reduce the displacement of the dome in the next earthquake. After a thorough historic review and commentary, the plaster corbels which loosely joined the dome to the ceiling were replaced with corbels constructed of polystyrene foam coated with hard urethane. This material reduced the weight of the corbels by 90% greatly limiting the potential displacement and damage of the corbels and enhancing safety in future earthquakes.

To ensure the quality of the repair, the University of Washington hired an architectural firm with historical preservation credentials, Architectural Resources Group of San Francisco. The firm quantified and categorized the damaged plaster and paint into eighteen types of damages and repair, developed plans, specifications and bid documents and monitored the quality and quantity of the repairs.

EverGreene Painting Studio was the contractor awarded the repair work which was completed on time for the start of the 2002-2003 season.

The total cost of the mitigation and repairs came to slightly over \$700,000.00, about 50% less than the original FEMA estimate of \$1,376,652 for the work.

Other team members contributing to the success of the project were Unico Properties, the maintenance company for the building; Unimark Construction, the contractor for the cabling; and the 5th Avenue Theatre, the theatre management that coordinated the repair logistics with the theatre functions.

Public Assistance News

Small Project Cost Overrun

Due to the nature of small projects, they are not normally eligible for cost overruns. If for some reason there is a large cost overrun for a small project or projects, an applicant may submit a letter to the Emergency Management Division (EMD) indicating the circumstances leading to the cost overrun. If appropriate, the small projects can be reinspected.

The amount of funding approved for small projects may only be appealed when all of the work under an applicant's small project worksheets has been completed. If the cumulative costs expended exceed the total amount of eligible costs approved under the applicants small project worksheets, an appeal of the funding may be considered. Such an appeal must be submitted to the Emergency Management Division within 60 days of the completion of the last small project. The appeal must include documentation of actual costs of all projects, including projects with underruns as well as those with overruns. As part of the review of the appeal, all of the small projects will be inspected for compliance with the approved scope of work and a financial review conducted for eligible costs.

If a request to the Department of Homeland Security for additional funds is required, the Department of Homeland Security Regional Director approves or disapproves payment of additional Public Assistance funds based on the nature and size of the cost overrun. Without prior approval, the Department of Homeland Security will not ordinarily approve a cost overrun in circumstances where there has been a change in the scope of a project after the original project worksheet was approved.

Supporting information from the subgrantee must be submitted promptly, if additional Public Assistance funds are sought.

Cost overruns are usually caused by one of the following:

- **Variations in unit pricing:** The unit prices used in the cost estimate may have been lower than those the applicant was actually charged
- **Change in the scope of work:** While performing the work, the applicant may find that additional eligible work or changes in the prescribed work are necessary.
- **Delay in starting or completing times:** problems beyond the applicant's control may contribute to delays in starting or completing work.

Several small project cost overruns have been filed under the Nisqually earthquake event. .

Public Assistance Program Contact Information

Need to reach your Public Assistance Coordinator or Program Assistant? The contact information below is provided for your convenience.

- Fran Cunningham, Program Assistant, (360) 570-6316
- Lori Guerrero, Public Assistance Coordinator, (360) 570-6311
- Sheryl Jardine , Public Assistance Coordinator, (360) 570-6307
- Clarin Blessing, Public Assistance Coordinator, (360) 570-6315
- David Santhuff, Public Assistance Coordinator, (360) 570-6323
- Evelyn Peters, Program Assistant, (360) 570-6310

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Public Assistance News

Statement of Documentation (SOD) and Final Inspection Report (FIR)

Large Projects

A Statement of Documentation (SOD) is required for all large projects those over \$50,600. Applicants with large projects should have received a "Statement of Documentation and Final Inspection Report" (SOD/FIR) form in the package with the approved project worksheet (PW). Once the large project has been completed and all claimed costs are available for review, the applicant completes the SOD/FIR form and sends it to the state Public Assistance Program. There seems to be confusion among some applicants as to what completion of project actually means. Substantial completion in a contract allows the applicant to use the building, but some detail work remains to be done. The Federal Emergency Management Agency does not recognize that condition as a completed project. To complete a project to FEMA requirements, the applicant must have finished all work and punch list items, and, have all invoices paid. To be eligible for reimbursement, these items must be completed by the projected completion date agreed upon by applicant and FEMA. For large projects, the applicant has 60 days from completing a project to submitting the Statement of Documentation which initiates the Final Inspection Report for that project.

When the SOD is received, the state will assign an inspector to perform the final inspection on the project. The inspector will check the form for accuracy and completeness, then contact the applicant agent to set up a meeting time to discuss the project, review documents, and perform a field review of the completed work. An accountant may come with the inspector to assist in the document review. It will be determined at this site visit if the intent, scope and cost of the work was accomplished in compliance to the PW. The inspector will write up the final inspection report portion of the SOD/FIR form. It will be reviewed at the state level, and forwarded to FEMA for their review and approval. Based on the SOD/FIR, any eligible cost adjustments will be determined and a version to the PW may be written. Once the approval of the SOD/FIR and the approved PW version are received from FEMA, a final payment, to include the PW retainage, can be made on the project.

Small Projects

Final inspections are required on small projects (those with costs less than \$50,600 for the Nisqually Earthquake disaster) that have funding conditions, usually outlined in the general comments section of the PW. Typical conditions are: hazard mitigation proposals, historical building allowances and requirements, environmental conditions, archeological considerations, and insurance requirements. Additionally, alternate or improved small projects will have final inspections completed.

Final inspections for small projects with conditions are initiated when the applicant sends a letter to the State Public Assistance Office certifying that all work in a small PW has been completed. The project must be fully completed within the prescribe time line with all details finalized. The Federal Emergency Management Agency does not recognize the term "substantial" completion as meeting their requirements for project closure due to the potential for unfinished details. The applicant has 60 days to submit the Certification of Completion letter after the project is finished. An inspector will then be assigned to conduct the final inspection on the project. The inspector will set up a meeting time to discuss the project and perform a field review of the completed work. The inspector will be checking to ensure the conditions of approval were met. If any deviations from the approved work occurred, the inspector will document them and make a recommendation on their eligibility for funding. The inspector will prepare a "Special Review Form" which is retained in the applicant's file at the State Public Assistance Program Office.

Public Assistance News

Applicants Survey

In order to find out how we have been doing and how we might improve in the future, Emergency Management Division's Public Assistance Program has been surveying applicants upon closeout for the Nisqually Earthquake. The two major areas that the applicants are surveyed on are Grant Process Awareness and Customer Satisfaction.

Under these it seems that the applicants are very please with the service we have been providing. There has been little to or no complaints about the way the project is been run. We have implemented a lot of the suggestions received by the applicants.

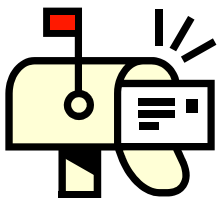
We have found that under the "Grant Process Awareness" we need to improve the way we identify the need for state technical and contract reviews prior to beginning a large project as well as increasing awareness on how to resolve major issues and how to pursue appeals.

Suggested changes are regularly being incorporated into the procedures followed by State PA staff. If you would like to discuss issues personally, please call Section Supervisors Patti Miller-Crowley at (360) 570-6306 or Bruce Baardson at (360) 570-6313.

Updates

Eighteen months after the 6.8 magnitude Nisqually Earthquake shook the state of Washington, the repairs continue. Under the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistance Program, 343 county, city, and local government, as well as private nonprofit organizations have identified over 1,868 projects requiring repairs.

The projects range in cost from \$1,000 (the minimum eligible amount) to \$5.2 million. Estimated project costs total over \$80 million, of which \$60 million is federal assistance funding, \$14.4 million is state assistance and the remaining \$5.6 million is the applicants' responsibility. Progress has been slow but steady. As of July 31, 2003, 109 of the 343 applicants, or 31.8%, have completed their projects and have been closed.



Watch your mailboxes! Upon the completion of your projects and closure of your file, you will receive a Public Assistance Customer Survey. It's your chance to rate our service, rate the application process and provide suggestions for improvement. We value your feedback.